

186 Army, which he sees as pointing the way into a world where
538 man can at last realize his destiny. Not for him the old,
626 unhappy, far-off things.

In Jambul's company this ideological war is then carried on to the ground of individual figures in history, and Kine Sari Khan the son of Kasim, the Kazak leader, comes in for special castigation. Historians are taken to task for publicizing in their works the reactionary-monarchist movement of 'K. Kasymov, the robber Khan'. Kine Sari was a reactionary and no defender of the people. Such defects can only be due to neglect of Bolshevik criticism in the literary circles of Kazakhstan. Historians and students alike must turn over a new leaf and cease to idealize brigands such as Kine Sari, Abilay and Nauruzbai. Artists and writers do not seem to realize the immense political changes which have taken place as a result of the carrying-out of the Lenin/Stalin national policy, and frequently take delight in an old and outworn past. They must not describe backward individuals as typical representatives of contemporary Soviet life. They must forswear literature of a formalist and cosmopolitan colour; that way lies pan-Turkism, pan-Iranism and pan-Islamism.

186 Music and the arts do not escape. In Kazakhstan musical
533 science is backward and on the wrong lines. The national
626 handbook of music is full of gross errors and idealizes a feudal past, regretting lost freedom. This is bourgeois-nationalism at its worst. Kazak musicians even dare to refer all musical achievement in the republic to the pre-revolutionary period, and to express such views publicly. In Uzbekistan the development of musical culture is far behind the economic, political and cultural growth of the republic — note the order — and does not meet the demands prescribed by the Party to the musical art, as a powerful means of Communist education of the workers. The minds of sculptors are low; they
• 532 do not deal with the heroic labour of the people in the pro-
626 duction of oil and cotton. One artist presumed to say his pictures would be appreciated in ten years' time: an anticipation of the future is as bad as a delight in the past, for it

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is the duty of Soviet man to glory in the achievements of contemporary life.

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There is some unconscious humour. There is the outrageous instance of a worker who, though a member of an anti-God league, was found with his Comsomol ticket in one pocket and his religious charm in the other. Too few, we are told, are worried by the fact that there are not enough girls in Comsomols; a massed attack must be made on the girls in the collective farms and an ideological-creative spirit must be displayed by the youth. The Deputy Chairman has even been seen going to the cinema, while his wife, suppressed by his bourgeois-nationalist outlook, remains at home to mind the children. Stalin wants no more decadent verses with descriptions of heroes and their horses and cattle, no more delight in the beauties of nature, no more sob-stuff about roses, nightingales and lovely maidens—and certainly not erotic poetry—, no more pictures of aged greybeards who close their eyes to pray and waste time on the job. All these are foreign to the aesthetic tastes of the Soviet people. The heroic labour of miners, metal-workers, cotton-growers and engineers—these are the true themes for contemporary literature and the arts. And, chiefly, let all remember their big Russian brother, without thought to spare for a separate world and a tradition dead and gone. [538]

This picture is not overpainted; it can be seen in its full colours by any casual visitor to the Stalinist public gallery. It is not imaginary to suppose that this unrelenting effort is prompted by a certain unease. Here in Central Asia is an exposed flank, the source of raw materials vital to the survival of the Empire, the home of peoples whose memories of their own civilization make them probably the least assimilable of all elements in the Union. At any cost then, in this quarter above all, it is necessary to suppress every tendency towards a separate national consciousness. The question to be asked is this—how far has this unceasing stream of exhortation and

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Babbar ruler of the 16th century cutting a melon. The features show a pronounced Turkic-Mongol cast. Contemporary miniature.

133 the Caspian Sea, and it is possible that at one time the entire river ran into that sea. Therefore, we find in the middle of the Kara Kum desert the ruins of large medieval towns marking the course which the water at one time took. At the present day both the Amu Darya and the Sir Darya run into the Aral Sea.

312 The four other rivers have no outlet, and would disappear in the desert, were it not for the fact that a system of irrigation which has been developed over a period of thousands of years serves to turn their waters to useful account. By means of this system the water is conducted through a net-work of canals which finally become mere ditches (ariks); thus it finds its way all over the country into every field, cotton-plantation, and orchard (see ill. page 1436). The distribution of the water is so well regulated that every peasant in Western Turkestan knows exactly on what day he can water his fields. Among these four rivers there are two particularly important ones, the Serafshan, the waters of which fill the ariks and mosque-ponds of Bokhara and Samarkand, and the Murghab, on which the prosperity of the oasis of Merv depends. In war-time the first thing to be destroyed was invariably the canal-system. The ancient city of Merv, at one

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312 time one of the most flourishing towns of
the Orient, and many other similar settle-
ments have thus become deserted ruins, cover-
ed with thorny bushes and saksaul (salt
shrubs). The irrigated districts on the contrary
245 are exceedingly fertile; they produce cotton
and fruit rather than grain. Apricots grow in
such abundance that only a small portion of
the harvest can be eaten or dried for the win-
ter; pomegranates, figs, and grapes are to be
had in large quantities. No country produces
more or better varieties of peaches, and mel-
ons are grown even in districts which are
484 practically deserts. Traffic by caravan (see ill.
page 1434) has reached a very high standard of
development.

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The municipal civilization which has grown
up in these oases is of great antiquity, as is
shown by the Zend Avesta, the sacred book of
the ancient Persians. Merv and other im-
portant towns have perished in the course of
the centuries, others, like Samarkand, continue
to flourish to this day. The libraries and theo-

532 *Timur (Tamerlane, 1370-1405) in front of his tent sur-
rounded by courtiers. Miniature in one of the oldest illustrated
biographies of Tamerlane. 1467. Privately owned, Brooklyn.*



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